

Puget Sound looks healthy on its surface; why do we need to act now?

Nearly 4 million people live in our region, and 1.5 million more are expected in the coming years. **How we grow, work and live is rapidly deteriorating the health of Puget Sound.**

- Each day 150,000 pounds of toxic oil, lead, mercury, sewage, fertilizer and other pollutants flow untreated into the waters of Puget Sound.
- More than 20 Puget Sound species – fish, birds, whales and plants – are at risk of vanishing and many are already gone.
- Orcas are the most contaminated mammals on the planet and are dying of starvation.
- Beaches and shellfish beds are closed because of pollution.
- Oxygen-starved dead zones plague marine life.

What is the Puget Sound Partnership?

In 2007, Governor Chris Gregoire and the Legislature created the Partnership to determine how and why Puget Sound is being polluted, and to organize a community-led effort to clean it up and protect it for the future.

The Partnership worked collaboratively with scientists, policy experts, business and environmental interests, Indian tribes, all levels of government, and citizens from all over the Sound to develop a strategy – the Action Agenda – to bring the Sound back to health. The Puget Sound Partnership formally adopted the Action Agenda Dec. 1, 2008. Implementation will require substantial investment, broad scale commitment and coordinated actions by partners and citizens throughout the region.

What is the Action Agenda?

The Action Agenda outlines immediate and long-term actions needed to make the Sound healthy again. It is based on the best available science and maintains the prosperity of the region.

The Action Agenda is comprised of four priority strategies:

1. **Protect.** By securing the last remaining natural areas, problems can be prevented before they occur – the best and most cost-effective way to maintain the Sound's health.
2. **Restore.** Human activities have vastly altered the Sound's land and waters. Restoration efforts must bring portions of river, wetland and marine systems back to life.
3. **Reduce.** The daily flow of 150,000 pounds of toxic pollution to the Sound must be reduced and stopped by curtailing its sources.
4. **Coordinate.** By better aligning efforts with involved stakeholders, improvements can be targeted, maximized and measured.

How will we fund the implementation and track progress?

The successful restoration of Puget Sound will require substantial investment. Funding will need to be a shared responsibility between state, federal, tribal and local governments. It will also require more innovative solutions to engage the private sector. The Partnership is developing an accountability system that will track and report on the effectiveness of actions and the efficiency of agencies in using public resources and funds to improve the health of Puget Sound.

2009—2011 Budget Priorities

Capital Budget

Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR)— \$33 million to Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)

- Funding Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) would implement priority Action Agenda restoration and protection projects that are community supported, science-based and technically vetted. Completing the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) project list would result in the protection and restoration of about 32 miles of marine shoreline and 113 miles of river shoreline; removal of 54 fish passage barriers; and more than 2,000 jobs.
- Budget proviso is needed to clarify that projects grants will be based upon a list of projects developed by the Puget Sound Partnership's (PSP) Leadership Council and that the grants are administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). This proviso is included in the Governor's Capital Budget errata and supported by the Office of Financial Management, the Puget Sound Partnership and the Recreation and Conservation Office.

Stormwater Retrofit and LID Implementation Grants— \$5 million to Department of Ecology (DOE)

- The Action Agenda identifies the ongoing input of pollution as one of the two biggest threats to Puget Sound. Stormwater is the state's fastest-growing water quality problem.
- Funding these grants will help local governments address stormwater management issues through facility retrofits and low-impact development projects.

Wetland Mitigation Reform, Pilot— \$5 million to Department of Ecology (DOE)

- Funding this innovative pilot will help reform and improve the effectiveness of wetland mitigation.
- Results will be disseminated through training to local entities to promote appropriate development, remediate armored shorelines and improve the vital habitat and ecosystems.

Puget Sound Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP)— \$7 million to Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)

- Puget Sound Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) provides grants to local, tribal and state government project sponsors to restore ecosystem processes and functions, one of the cornerstones of the Action Agenda.
- Funding Puget Sound Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) will result in 3,300 acres of high-priority restoration and protection projects, including dike removal, wetland restoration and bulkhead removal.

Operating Budget

Standby Emergency Response Tug— \$3.6 million to DOE

- Every day Washington's coastal waters and shorelines are vulnerable to major oil spills caused by large commercial vessels.
- Having an emergency response tug stationed at Neah Bay, a near-term action identified in the Action Agenda, would: reduce the number of major or catastrophic oil spills; reduce potential for loss of life of ship crews; and protect marine mammals, salmon, sea birds, public beaches, shellfish beds, tribal lands and fishing waters.

Update Shoreline Regulations to Protect Puget Sound Shoreline Habitat— \$3.6 million to DOE

- Shoreline regulations are vital for the protection of freshwater and marine shorelines throughout the state. Local jurisdictions need assistance to complete necessary updates.
- Funding this proposal would: complete Shoreline Master Program updates on the schedule adopted by the Legislature; and improve DOE's oversight of compliance with regulations that protect aquatic habitat.

Puget Sound Partnership 2009-11 Budget— \$7.6 million GF-S and \$4.8 million Other Funds

- Retain base funding proposed in the Governor's Budget for the Partnership to:
 1. Meet its statutory requirements,
 2. Establish the structure and commitments necessary for the successful implementation of the Action Agenda,
 3. Enlist, direct and leverage the public's support on this important initiative. and
 4. Build in measures for progress and accountability.

2009 Bill Priorities

HB 1997—Regarding Puget Sound scientific research

- **House Sponsor:** Finn
- This bill aligns the Puget Sound Scientific Research Account (PSSR) with the Science Panel's objectives and establishes a process for accountability by: limiting expenditures from the account to programs selected by the Science Panel; and requiring the Science Panel to develop and implement a process for peer review of monitoring, research and modeling.

HB 1409/ SB 5344—Providing an emergency response system for the Strait of Juan de Fuca

- **Senate Sponsor:** Ranker **House Sponsor:** Van De Wege
- The intent of this bill is specified in the Action Agenda. It requires certain vessels entering the Strait of Juan de Fuca west of Port Angeles to include a catastrophic event response provision in their oil spill contingency plan that includes a contract with a rescue tug.

HB 2116—Regarding water pollution control

- **House Sponsor:** Maxwell
- This bill revises provisions regarding funding for water pollution control and brings project applications in alignment with the Action Agenda.
- It specifies that recommendations of the Action Agenda be included when prioritizing project applications for loans and grants.

SHB 1172 / SSB 5165—Implementing a transfer of development rights program

- **Senate Sponsor:** Jarrett **House Sponsor:** Simpson
- The legislation directs Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) to establish a regional TDR program in central Puget Sound, including King, Kitsap, Snohomish, and Pierce counties and their associated cities and towns. Implementation of the bill is subject to available funding outside of state general fund.
- The purpose of the program is to create a voluntary county, city, and town participation to slow the conversion of rural, agricultural, and resource lands in central Puget Sound.

HB 1653—Clarifying the integration of the Shoreline Management Act policies with the Growth Management Act

- **House Sponsor:** Simpson
- Modifies provisions in the Growth Management Act (GMA) pertaining to the integration of the GMA and the Shoreline Management Act.
- Establishes new provisions in the GMA pertaining to improve the protection of certain critical areas located within shorelines of the state.

SB 5944—Implementing a demonstration project to reduce phosphorus loading in Lake Whatcom

- **Senate Sponsor:** Ranker
- The Puget Sound Partnership will assist the Department of Ecology, city of Bellingham and Whatcom County to implement a demonstration program regarding phosphorus loading into Lake Whatcom that includes elements for prevention, education, compliance, and monitoring.

HB 1165—Providing for the safe collection and disposal of unwanted drugs from residential sources through a producer provided and funded product stewardship program.

- **House Sponsor:** Morrell
- Requires that the producers of unwanted medicines sold in Washington create and fund product stewardship programs to collect unwanted medicines from consumers and dispose of them at hazardous waste facilities.